

Wayne Allard

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ALLARD INTRODUCES CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE BILL LEGISLATION COORDINATES RESPONSE, INCREASES FUNDING

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-CO) on Friday introduced a comprehensive bi-partisan Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) bill that coordinates and increases the federal response to the disease, which has impacted Colorado and nine other states, as well as two Canadian provinces and the Korean Peninsula. U.S. Senators Russ Feingold (D-WI), Ben Nighthorse Campbell (R-CO), Herb Kohl (D-WI), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Conrad Burns (R-MT), and Larry Craig (R-ID) joined Allard as original co-sponsors on the bill. Allard introduced similar legislation in the 107th Congress.

“The goal of this new legislation is to put in place a coordinated effort to battle Chronic Wasting Disease, and to emphasize the importance of its eradication,” said Allard. “This unified approach will ensure USDA and Interior have the resources necessary to assist Colorado and other states currently battling CWD.”

According to Senator Feingold, passage of federal legislation is critical to the state of Wisconsin. “This legislation is acutely needed. Wisconsin's experience in getting federal assistance to address this problem, though eventually forthcoming, has been extremely slow and frustrating,” Feingold said. “The federal government must make chronic wasting disease a higher priority. This bill does that by providing additional funds and an explicit mandate to establish a coordinated federal program.”

“This legislation goes a long way to keeping chronic wasting from continuing to plague wild deer and elk in Colorado and the rest of the United States,” said Campbell. “It offers a comprehensive plan that includes diagnostic testing and data collection in the immediate future, as well as long-term management strategies.”

The legislation, known as the Chronic Wasting Disease State Support Act of 2002, would:

- Create a national CWD repository, that contains surveillance and monitoring data for both captive and wild deer and elk. (Interactive Internet based website that will store data from state and federal agencies to track the disease.)

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- Direct the Secretary of the Interior to develop a modeling program of the diseases spread in the wild - including environmental data and permanent information.
- Direct the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a sampling protocol to be used by state and federal agencies for the collection and stabilization of tissue samples.
- Require the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a program for certification of federal and non-labs conducting CWD testing.
- Expand research into the development of live tests and field diagnostic testing.
- Establish a captive herd program to be managed by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.
- Require upgrading of federal facilities for diagnostic testing and certified labs.
- Expand and accelerates basic research of CWD by ARS.
- Expand grants to CSREES (Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service) for research and education on CWD.
- Require interagency coordination to distribute grants to states, allowing the lead state agency to qualify for the grants.
- Authorize \$10 million in grants for wildlife management, and long-term management strategies for CWD, and to expand diagnostic and testing capabilities.
- Require a report to Congress in 180 days by both USDA and Interior on their efforts.

The total amount authorized in the legislation is \$34.5 million. The bill has been referred to committee where it awaits further action. Senator Allard will pursue a hearing on the bill and looks forward to enacting the proposal.

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